

Statistical references

West Bank statistics are handled exclusively by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in Jerusalem (CBS), which commenced by conducting a census of population in September 1967¹. The results of that census constitute the most comprehensive reference on the demographic and housing characteristics of the occupied territories, as they were shortly after occupation. Since then, the CBS has been entrusted with collecting and publishing a wide range of statistics on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Collected statistics are published in two periodicals:

Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly and the Statistical Abstract of Israel. It should be emphasized, however, that in the researcher's opinion the validity of statistics collected by the CBS is not notably high². Besides a lack of adequate staff and facilities, CBS personnel receive very little cooperation from a highly suspicious population. Nevertheless, the said publications remain the major source of statistics on the occupied territories, and most of their data are reliable enough to indicate general trends, which should then be further qualified through direct field contacts.

Much of the post-occupation data on areas and output of various types of farming and livestock statistics have been procured directly from the files and records available at the district office of the Department of Agriculture. Statistical information was also obtained from cooperative officials and agricultural schools.

1. Census of Population 1967, (Jerusalem: Israel Defence Forces and the Central Bureau of Statistics, 1968) - five volumes.
2. Sharp criticism of CBS data is also expressed by some Israeli researchers. A noted example is the Director of the West Bank Office in the Research Department at the Bank of Israel who expressed his critical views in a personal meeting with Vivian Bull. The latter related that remark to the researcher in a private meeting in the summer of 1980.

It should be noted that data obtained from Government offices were channelled despite strict orders not to release any information to anyone without prior consent of Israeli officials. Close personal relations with most workers in the offices of agriculture and cooperatives have been very helpful for the researcher in overcoming this difficulty. Needless to say, therefore, the researcher has a moral obligation not to identify, in writing, such sources of information. For this reason, it was decided to refer to the files of respective departments without a further indication to the source. Even this could entail some risk.

Pre-occupation data on the West Bank is available in reports released by Jordan's specialized government bodies, mainly the Department of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture. The former publishes an annual statistical yearbook and a large number of other specialized reports. Although population data was sufficiently detailed to give an overview of West Bank districts, economic data published by the Statistics Department was presented in a combined aggregate form which made it difficult to isolate the West Bank's data. Fortunately, this was not the case with production statistics released annually by the Ministry of Agriculture, which produced detailed annual data on acreage and output of all common types of farming in various districts. West Bank production data is available up until 1966.¹

Israeli economic literature

The advent of Israeli occupation has stimulated a profuse amount of

1. Summarized in the Agricultural Atlas of Jordan, 1974, (Amman: Ministry of Agriculture, 1975).